

## MICHIGAN'S WETLAND CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Date: 1993 - 1997

Organizational Structure: Michigan's Wetland Advisory Committee (MWAC) composed of 12 individuals representing different perspectives on issues involving wetlands including federal, state, county, professional and volunteer agencies.

Consensus: The Michigan Wetland Conservation Strategy was developed and arrived at by consensus after extensive discussion and consideration by MWAC.

Coordinated By: Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (est. 1995), Land and Water Management Division

Process:

Components: The primary goal of the MWAC was to establish mechanisms and procedures to achieve no overall net loss of wetland functions, provide a statewide perspective on wetland resources and provide a method for identifying future wetland management needs and opportunities. The issues and concerns addressed by the MWAC were intended to compliment and extend statewide wetland management and protection beyond existing law and private initiatives.

### **Major Elements of the Strategy:**

Wetland Reclamation Initiative – implementation of statewide wetland restoration will occur largely by utilizing ongoing resource management programs and initiatives (designed to enhance fish or wildlife habitat, protect or improve water quality, provide increased flood control, etc.) and the interest of individual landowners.

State wetland restoration priorities include rare ecosystem types, geographic targeting, functional priorities (wildlife habitat, floodplain management, remedial action plans), programmatic opportunities (statewide and local programs and private landowners), and identification of wetland goals and projects.

The Wetland Reclamation Initiative also includes development of funding incentives, technical assistance, direction of restoration and information management, regulatory coordination and evaluation.

Education and Outreach – wetland education, both in the public school K-12 curriculum, and through broader public education including development of wetland training materials for local officials and for county prosecutors.

Wetland Policy Development and Regulatory Protection of Critical Non-Contiguous Wetlands

- 1) review, analysis and development of comprehensive wetland policy and regulatory initiatives (cumulative impacts study, identification of critical areas, state wetland inventory)
- 2) development of a procedure for identifying critical non-contiguous wetland areas and a procedure for landowner notification

Promulgation of Wetland Water Quality Standards - development of water quality standards specific to wetlands (hydrology, chemistry, land use); review of water quality impacts on wetland systems (by MDEQ, LWMD and Surface Water Quality Division); and integration of wetland standards into existing stormwater management regulatory programs; protection of wetlands through permitting and licensing; protection of wetland water quality on a watershed basis; evaluation of wetland quality.

Continued Coordination and Implementation of a Comprehensive Statewide Strategy – need for adaptability and flexibility in the basic structure of the Strategy to address new issues and approaches in both wetland policy and wetland science as they develop. The Strategy recommends: ongoing communication and coordination between agencies and organizations; compilation and distribution of information to help ensure that wetland programs both enhance and keep pace with wetland science; and the provision of information to the public.

The Strategy also includes a comprehensive review of issues in wetland protection and management including non-regulatory wetland management programs and special initiatives (wetland inventory and restoration, watershed based planning, watershed councils), and wetland protection and management on a local and regional scale.